

Amendments to the Claims

The following list of claims replaces all previous versions of claims. In particular, claim 8 has been amended, without prejudice, to more particularly point out and claim the subject matter Applicants regarded as the invention.

1-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) A wiring structure for an integrated circuit, comprising:

a first dielectric layer;

a plurality of conductors disposed on said first dielectric layer, said conductors separated laterally from each other by portions of the first dielectric layer and portions of a second dielectric layer and by air gaps, each of the conductors having air gaps adjacent thereto separating the conductor from the first dielectric layer and the second dielectric layer; and

a third dielectric layer overlying the conductors,

wherein

said first dielectric layer and said third dielectric layer each have a dielectric constant less than that of the second dielectric layer, and

each of said conductors has a cross-section wider at a top thereof than at a bottom thereof, in accordance with each of the air gaps having a cross-section wider at a bottom thereof than at a top thereof.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) A wiring structure according to claim 8, further comprising a conducting stud in said first dielectric layer and in contact with one of said conductors.

11. (Previously Presented) A wiring structure according to claim 8, wherein said second dielectric layer is of silicon dioxide.

12. (Previously Presented) A wiring structure according to claim 8, wherein a cross-section of each of said conductors has a bottom in contact with said first dielectric layer, a top in contact with said third dielectric layer, and sides in contact only with the air gaps.